



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION 7  
25 FUNSTON ROAD  
KANSAS CITY, KANSAS 66115

September 19, 1985

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Vulcan

FROM: Dan Harris *Dan Harris*  
Environmental Engineer, FIRE/EP&R/ENSV

TO: John C. Wicklund *JC Wicklund*  
Director, ENSV

THRU: Ronald D. McCutcheon *RD McCutcheon*  
Chief, FIRE/EP&R/ENSV

*WJ Keffer*  
William J. Keffer *WJ Keffer*  
Chief, EP&R/ENSV

It is the purpose of this memo to summarize my telephone conversations with various individuals concerning the subject facility. This endeavor started about 1000 hours, Wednesday, September 11, 1985, as a result of a telephone call from you indicating the possibility of a release from the plant. These telephone conversations are summarized as follows:-

Gary Blackburn, KDHE, Topeka

Not aware of a release, referred me to the Regional office in Wichita.

Ray Kinney, KDHE, Wichita

Not aware of release, referred me to the Sedgwick County Health Department.

George Henderguard, County Health, 316-268-8351

Indicated Vulcan had reported a release of 700 pounds of HCL during loading or unloading of a truck. Reportedly, a pipe flange broke. This information was reported to County Health by Vulcan which indicated there were no injuries. Reportedly, no one from County health or the Haz Mat team responded. George gave me a Vulcan contact (Gary Mason).

Gary Mason, Vulcan Environmental Coordinator, 316-524-4211

Mr. Mason called me about 1100 hours, to report they had spilled about 700 pounds of 36 percent HCL at about 0700 hours, September 11, 1985. He indicated about 50 to 70 pounds of this acid had volatilized and that the wind was blowing from northeast to southwest. The remainder was spilled



on plant grounds (on concrete) and went in to their holding ponds. Acid remaining on the concrete was neutralized with soda ash. Mr. Mason indicated their policy was to report all spills (regardless of whether or not CERCLA reportable quantities) to County Health and reportable quantities to EPA and KDHE. (From the Federal Register the reportable quantity for HCL is 5,000 pounds).

He further indicated that with regard to the previous evening (September 10, 1985); Ralph O'Conner (KDHE, Wichita) had received an odor complaint concerning Vulcan (about 2030 hours). The company, after checking it out, could only attribute the complaint to a small ammonia leak which they found and corrected.

Mr. Mason explained that they have an extensive monitoring and alarm system within the plant. Mr. Mason was cordial and invited me to contact him if I had any questions in the future.

Donn Hindiliter, 316-524-5719

In response to a call to the Regional Administrator's office, I called Ms. Hindiliter about 0820 hours, September 12, 1985. She is a private citizen and expressed complaints about Vulcan and related that a neighbor, Mr. Charlie Becker, has to wear a mask of some sort to carry out his farming because of releases from Vulcan. She gave me his number and suggested I call him.

Sherilyn Dienst, Route 1, Benton, Kansas 67017, 316-778-1029

In response to another call to the Regional Office, I also called Ms. Dienst at about 0900 hours September 12, 1985. She likewise expressed a number of concerns about Vulcan and suggested I call Mr. Becker.

Charlie Becker, Rural Route 1, Clearwater, Kansas 67026, 316-545-7274

After numerous attempts I reached Mr. Becker about 1325 hours, September 12, 1985. He indicated he was 50 years old, and had been married for 30 years and had lived in the area his entire life. He and his family owned four quarters (640 acres) and farm 960 acres around Vulcan.

Mr. Becker indicated there have been problems with Vulcan for years. On September 11, 1985, they had three releases; one at 0700 hours, one at 0730 hours, and one at 1030 hours. He thought the last two were from RACON, which is owned by Vulcan. He indicated that he wore a mask that morning to do his farm work and could still smell the same "sweet smell" on the morning of the 12th. Mr. Becker lives two miles west of the plant, and the cloud from the release on the 11th went through his yard. He could observe the cloud past his place. From this observation, he estimated the cloud to be at least three miles in length. He indicated is Vulcan located in SW 1/4 section 27 and that he lives NE 1/4 section 30.

There is an environmental group forming called "Neighbors Against Pollution". Mr. Becker is to head it. He indicated they were going to the Governor's office and to KDHE next week.

Mr. Becker recited a litany of problems and concerns with regard to Vulcan including the following:

1. Plant warning system for employees but none for area residents
2. Need for a monitoring system for residents
3. Buried drums of Vulcan waste
4. Interceptor wells to capture leachate from buried waste
5. Air releases of unknown substances
6. Hydraulic subsurface mining for salt with subsequent cave-ins
7. Injection wells
8. Vulcan buying up land around the plant to create buffer zone
9. Health problems within a 5-mile radius of the plant including:
  - ° 60 known cases of cancers
  - ° multiple sclerosis
  - ° nerve disorders
  - ° seizures
10. Barium and nitrates in private wells
11. Vulcan pending permits for more deep wells, incineration, cogeneration, etc.
12. Death and illness of calves

Basically, Mr. Becker explained that they did not want anymore expansion at Vulcan until the company can manage what they have. He does not want to see them shut down but wants them to clean-up their act, provide a monitoring and warning system for the residents and an epidemiologic study of residents. He stated that he has a large amount of written material he is going through as a means of self-education on the local situation and offered to show any EPA staff around should we decide to send someone down.

Laurie Maddy, Route 1, Box 76, Clearwater, Kansas 67026 (tele: 316-545-7356)

After numerous attempts, I reached Ms. Maddy about 1440 hours, September 13, 1985. This call was also in response to an earlier call she had placed to the Regional office. Ms. Maddy reiterated many of the same concerns as Mr. Becker. She indicated they live two miles south of Vulcan and have land adjacent to the plant.

She stated that she had been diagnosed as having some incurable lung disease (cause unknown) which she attributed to releases from Vulcan. She indicated the fumes in the area were horrible. She stated that KDHE was going to initiate some monitoring program for air and water the week of September 16, 1985. All private wells within a 1-mile radius of the plant would be checked in addition to selected wells between the 1-and 2-miles radius. She did not know what parameters were to be included in the monitoring. She stressed that if we did any field work it should be unannounced. I explained that no decision had been made to do any field investigation but that because of the equipment involved, it would be practically impossible to do unannounced field work.

cc: Morris Kay, RGAD  
William Rice, RGAD  
Tim Amsden, WATR  
Karen Flournoy, ARWM  
Ralph Langemeier, PLMG/MSAL  
Steve Kinser, SPFD  
Kent Johnson, CNSL  
Harold Owens, WATR/DRNK  
Bob Chanslor, ARWM  
Bob Fenemore, PLMG/ENRV  
Billy Fairless, EMCM  
Earlene Wilson, CIGL  
Rowena Michaels, PBAF  
*Wagoner WSTM*